

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17-19, and 22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, and 23 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 10 and 20 are independent. Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, and 23 are allowed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the above amendments do not add new matter to the application and are fully supported by the specification.

In view of the above amendments and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,890,674 issued to Beckmann, *et al.* ("Beckmann").

Claim 17 has been canceled, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,303,244 issued to Surampudi, *et al.* ("Surampudi") in view of Beckmann.

Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Beckmann as applied to claim 17, in view of Surampudi.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 19, and 22 have been canceled, thereby rendering these rejections moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, and 23 are allowed.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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